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The Sketch

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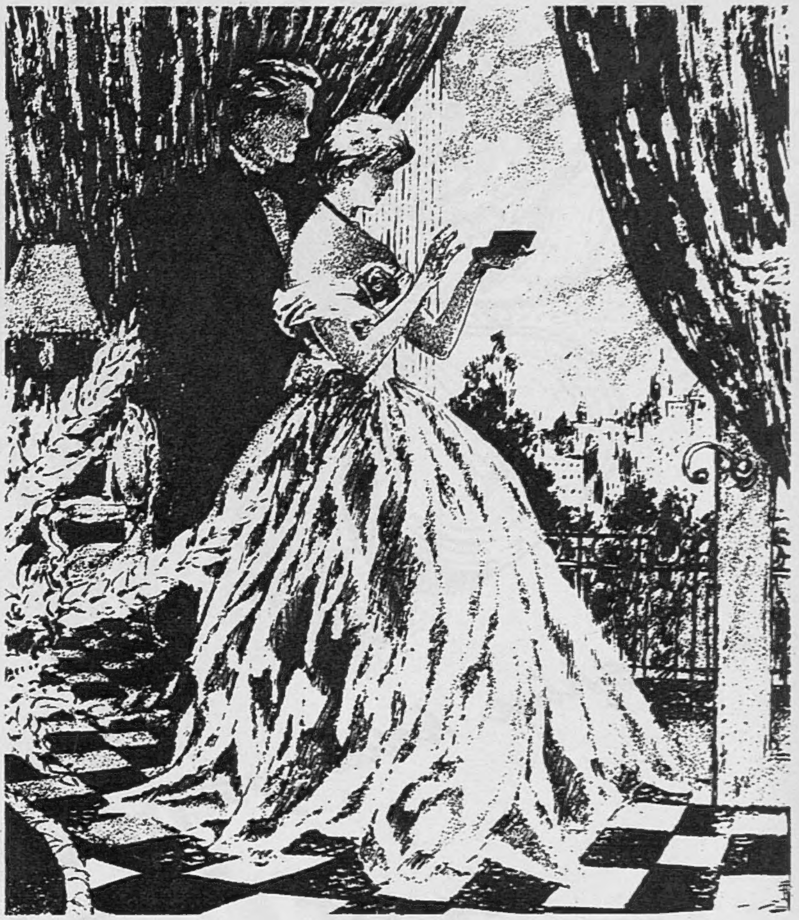

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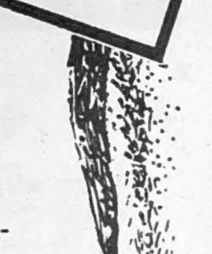

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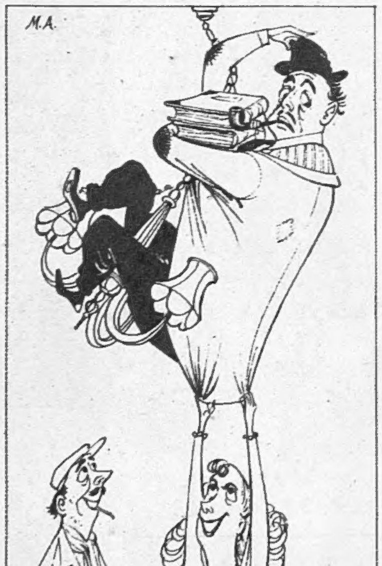
The Sketch

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3, 1951

TWO SHOWS:
MAI ZETTERLING

HERE this attractive Swedish actress is seen in the Arthur Rank film *Blackmailed*, which is due in the West End in a fortnight's time. And *Point of Departure*, Jean Anouilh's modern version of the story of Orpheus and Eurydice, in which Mai plays brilliantly the feminine lead, is now running at the Duke of York's Theatre, after transferring from Hammersmith's Lyric.

CAVALRY IN THE SNOW : A wintry scene in the Mall as the Household Cavalry come off duty.



"...WOMEN WILL NEVER REALISE THAT MEN GROW FOND OF OLD PIPES, OLD CLOTHES, OLD BOOKS, AND OLD SHOES."

Sketch-Book

BEVERLEY BAXTER

WITH only one day left before the ship was to sail to Canada, my wife said, with a note of finality which left no room for argument : " You must get a new hat." Knowing that it was a losing battle, I asked her why. " You can't go away with that awful-looking hat," she answered.

What a ridiculous attitude ! Does she think that I am going to wear it at lunch, or that my host and hostess will gaze out of the window to see what kind of hat is on my head ? A woman's hat is, of course, quite another thing. It is worn to infuriate other women but never to please men. Yet we chaps have a far better taste in women's headgear than they have.

Only the other day I saw a pretty woman with a baby face and lovely hair wearing a hat that looked like a hand-grenade. It added nothing to her appearance, and was quite useless as a protection from the rain or the fierce rays of a London winter sun. But it was new, and all the women in the place were eyeing her with envy and malice.

That, however, is a digression. My hat is a soft, shapeless black Anthony Eden affair with the letters " W.W." inside. I cannot say where I picked it up, but it is definitely a better example of the hatter's art than the previous one that was initialled " C.M.M." If any male reader of *The Sketch* has one with " B.B." on the band he might have the decency to return it—and no questions will be asked.

But what does my wife mean by the *pronunciamento* that I must buy a new one ? When I go up the gang-plank to-morrow will the captain say to the chief officer : " I say, that fellow's wearing a damn smart hat. Ask the purser to find out where he got it." Will women point me out to their husbands and ask why they cannot look like that ?

Anyway, the confounded thing will not appear again on the voyage. When I get to Toronto it will be snowing, and any hat will look like a Christmas cake. In New York everyone is in too much of a hurry to notice or to care. Besides, what chance have men in competition with the gorgeous American girl ?

WOMEN will never realise that men grow fond of old pipes, old clothes, old books and old shoes. To discard a jacket is like casting away a good friend. Think what places this " W.W." hat has been with me—endless first-nights where it was trodden into a shapeless pulp by latecomers ; railway journeys where, in the rack, it has been mangled by sharp-cornered suit-cases ; on its peg in the cloak-room of the House of Commons, swapping yarns with some of the most

distinguished hats in Great Britain ; in the front hall of my house, waiting like a faithful page to accompany its master whatever the weather may be.

And just as it is looking forward to a trip abroad, it is dismissed without notice. What is more, I have to go into the swirling mob of Christmas shoppers and stand in a shop while my wife and an assistant decide what hat I shall wear. Good-bye, "W.W." You came from a strange head, or, at any rate, a stranger's head, and served me loyally in rain and wind and sun.

You will remember in the last act of *La Bohème* how Colline sings a farewell to his old coat :

"Garment antique and rusty,
A last good-bye, farewell !
Faded friend so tried and trusty
We must part, you and I.
For never yet your back did bow
To rich man or to mighty.
How oft, safe in your pockets spacious
Have you concealed philosophers and poets !
Now that our pleasant friendship is o'er
I would bid thee once more,
Oh ! companion tried and trusty,
Farewell ! Farewell !"

Then the orchestra plays those sad, rhythmic chords, *Dum, dum, dum, tee dum*, and Musetta gets on with her dying. So, like Colline, I sing : "Farewell, old hat !"

Now the women of the house are packing for me. Is there a paper shortage ? Not in St. John's Wood. Look at those shoes all wrapped up in tissue paper, and a horde of ties making a sort of sandwich between two layers of paper. And why three dozen handkerchiefs ? Even in New York one is not wholly out of touch with civilisation or laundries. Then that mountain of socks ! Are we a centipede ?

Warm suits, cool suits, blue suits, grey suits, shirts ancient and modern, more handkerchiefs, heavy dressing-gown, light dressing-gown, pyjamas for a platoon, clothes-brush, gloves thick enough for a mountain climbing. . . .

Where are they going to put my books ? What ! Carry them under my arm ? Imagine going up the gang plank with Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, *Hitler the Pawn*, and Boswell's *Diary* not only in full view, but having to hold them while you produce your passport, tickets, vaccination certificate, exchange voucher, and search your pockets to prove that you have only five pounds on your person. It can't be done. Take out half those handkerchiefs and put the books in their place.

THE traveller to the U.S.A. has to answer a lot of questions before he is admitted to the free United States, some of them being of a highly personal nature. What, for example, am I to reply to the query : "Can you read and write ?" Reading is easy enough to prove, but there may well be differing opinions on whether one can write. Take Mr. —— of the *Sunday* ——, for example. He thinks he can write, but every Sunday proves that he can't. But should he be debarred from entering America on that account ?

At any rate, it is by no means certain that anyone reads the forms that are filled in. Many years ago a friend of mine named Peter Donovan had lunched so well that when he went to fill in the form for going to the U.S.A. he affirmed that all his ancestors were lunatics, that he himself was suffering from every contagious disease listed on the form, that he had been in gaol frequently, and that his intention in going to America was to destroy the Government. Within twenty-four hours he was granted a visa—but perhaps the U.S.A. were not so particular in those days.

STRANGELY enough, I shall regret missing the pantomime season in London. Even if its origin is early Roman, its development is completely British. How revealing it is to hear the kiddies shriek warning to the criminal that the policeman is coming. Children have a wisdom of their own which makes them befriend the malefactor and confound the upholder of the law.

Take the school scene when the comedians, dressed as small boys, blow peas at the teacher or remove the chair just as he is going to sit in it. This is as it should be according to the anarchical principles of the very young. That is what makes babies throw crockery off their high-chairs to the floor. They are natural smash-and-grabbers, and some of them never get over it.

Cinderella never fails to charm, because of its appeal to the deepest feelings in the British breast. Here we have class distinction, unrestricted free enterprise, and a successful marriage. It could be argued that a small foot is hardly a firm foundation for the choice of a wife, and it certainly rules out the hunting set in England, but the story is too old to change. Strangely enough, *Cinderella* is as popular in Russia as with us. They do not even change Prince Charming to a Commissar, nor is there a painting of Stalin hanging on the palace wall. Perhaps there is reason for hope in that.

AND now there only remains the pleasant duty of wishing all *Sketch* readers a measure of happiness and an abundance of good health in the New Year. It cannot be more than a measure of happiness, since the evil fairies will have been in full force at the birth of 1951.

A young man said to me the other day : "My generation had its boyhood but it has had no youth." That has been true from the time that Hitler rose from the swamps to curse, defile and destroy humanity. For the last fifteen years there have been threats of war, talk of war, preparations for war, and then war in all its dreadful reality.

Nor does victory bring peace, but only a re-alignment of opposing forces. Yet the Russian worker has no quarrel with the British worker. He asks little of life but to eat and sleep, to work and laugh and love, and to have a home with wife and children. But propaganda, that fiendish invention of the modern world, has him in its grip. No longer do men seek truth, because it cannot make itself seen or heard. Suppression and Distortion are more deadly than the atomic bomb, for they poison men's minds.

What a picture the world presents at this hour ! Fear has replaced belief, hatred has conquered mercy, and science is harnessed to evil. From the Kremlin comes a voice relayed across the world : "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye hate one another." Once men were guided by a star ; now we look at the skies and wonder when death will strike.

Yet in the spring the trees will blossom and beauty will adorn the land. The lengthening days will end the winter tyranny of darkness, and Orpheus's lute will sound again. Leaf and bud and blossom—while the world crouches in fear.

Perhaps it is a time to remember those simple, homely lines :

"Through the dark and stormy night
Faith holds a feeble light,
Up the blackness streaking ;
Knowing God's own time is best,
In a patient hope I rest
For the full day-breaking !"

There are times when it is hard to keep the faith, but perhaps in this New Year mankind may begin to draw back from the hellish pit which it has dug. Perhaps if we believe, it may come true. But the world needs a Voice. Who speaks for humanity to-day ? We listen—and the only sound is the roar of engines, the thunder of the guns, and the call to hatred.

I am sorry to end on this sombre note, but 1951 will be a year of fate. When its story is ended we shall see more clearly the shape of things to come. Perhaps we shall have reason to bless this young and innocent year which is just born. Perhaps even in the affairs of men the winter will pass.

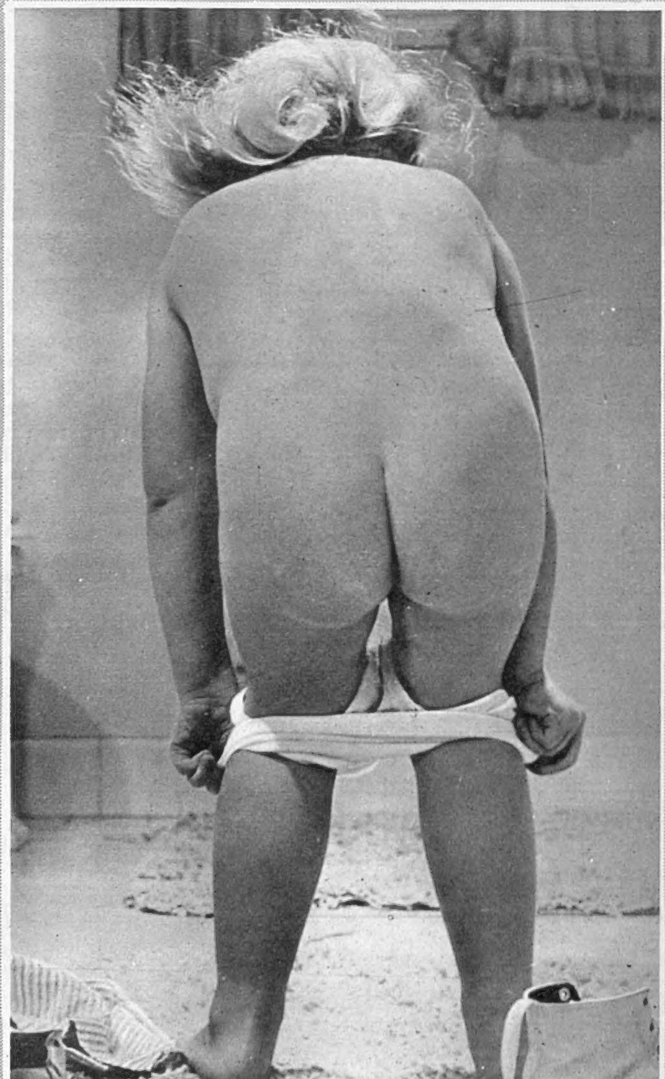
Beverley Baxter

Illustrated by Martin Aitchison

"First of all, I find the noise and racket of rearmament is most disturbing . . .

. . . and it'll be tough if I go down in history as an Austerity throw-back . . .

. . . But then, of course, there's the Festival of Britain . . .



. . . But for the love of Mike don't let's be caught bending!"

IN WISHING ALL OUR READERS
A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR
WE PRESENT HEREWITH SOME ASPECTS
OF THE SITUATION CONFRONTING
THE INFANT 1951

Photographs from "Parents' Magazine," U.S.A.

A WELCOME AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO THE NEW U.S. AMBASSADOR, MR. WALTER S. GIFFORD, AND HIS WIFE

. . . whose first thought on arriving in this country was to wish all Britain a Happy Christmas. To which Mr. Gifford added : "I hope we shall all have a very happy New Year, with real strides towards permanent peace."

Candid Cameo

SIR DAVID MAXWELL FYFE

By James Dowdall

The nearest thing to death-in-life
Is David Patrick Maxwell Fyfe;
But underneath his heavy shell
He does himself extremely well.

THE victim of this penetrating little jingle sat back in his chair and assumed the large but non-committal smile used by platform speakers when the chairman is "reminded" of an ancient jest about Mick, Jock and Cohen. The same age as the twentieth century, he was then thirty-three; and the Birkenheadish clamp of his lower lip on his cigar, the aggressive wrinkle of his forehead and the gladiatorial set of his deep chest fitted well with the rumours that he was about to become the youngest K.C. in 300 years. Judges feel confidence in an expanding waistline—the lounge-lizard advocate is a movie-myth—and this he had dutifully acquired. The white side-wings which traditionally appear on all distinguished, dark-haired men were already beginning to sprout. The hair itself was thinning on top—another sign of sterling worth—and the mixture of swarthiness and pallor of those who spend their lives in the strange twilight of legal courts and chambers had attacked his complexion early. Nature had certainly dressed the part to perfection.

It is the custom of the Northern Circuit, at "Grand Court" after Mess, to rag its members with verses of this kind. But the laughter not only told how well its writer had hit the mark, but proved how brilliantly the victim himself had maintained the façade of solemn, Scots rectitude which was one of the mainstays of his reputation. While still a pupil in the chambers of the future Mr. Justice Lynskey, he had noticed that nothing so impresses the solicitors of a big provincial town as a young barrister who carries about him that kind of spiritual portliness acquired only by those who always get their briefs dot-and-comma perfect before sipping some hot milk over a chapter of *Barchester Towers* and committing themselves to a self-satisfied slumber. And this part he therefore decided to play.

Before he was thirty, his bedside manner was the pride of the Liverpool Bar. To Judges he behaved as though he were an eminent physician attending a Royal confinement. To juries he was the worldly-wise G.P., warning them against the bogus patent medicines of his learned friend and convincing them that his own sound, common-sense treatment was far the best. Yet their Lordships, nodding approvingly down on their favourite sixth-former—such a model of earnest thoroughness—might have been surprised if they could have looked in at his house where the semi-Bohemian entourage of the "Rep" theatre wandered in and out as they pleased without ringing the bell, and his wife's brother, Rex Harrison, sat on the broad window-sill moodily practising key-changes on his ukulele and wondering whose Bentley he could borrow for the week-end.

Only his friends, however, were allowed to see behind the heavy shell. It had also the advantage that his contemporaries, so long as they could allow themselves to feel almost patronising to "dear old David's" insatiable appetite for work and his complete freedom from ordinary, human temptations, were far more ready to forgive him his success than if he had made his name as a lightning swordsman, wit and opportunist of the Birkenhead type.

His career therefore took on the form of a stately, royal progress in which nobody felt they were losing dignity by drawing to the kerb as he went by. At the time of his record-breaking promotion to silk, a certain Judge said of him: "Fyfe is like a man crossing a river on stepping-stones. If he loses momentum, he 'll fall in. But if he can keep his practice as a leader, he 'll reach the other side; and I think he will."

He did. The stepping-stones shot past—Recorder of Oldham . . . M.P. for West Derby . . . Bencher of Gray's Inn . . . Solicitor-General (again the youngest for three centuries) . . . Attorney-General. At Nuremberg the American correspondents were fascinated by the relentless way in which he gradually deflated the balloon-like Goering till he sagged in the witness-box—still with that awesome dead-pan style of his which makes a prisoner feel he might as well bluff the Judgment Seat as try and bluff Sir David. So much for the triumph of the heavy shell.

To study, in close-up, the inspiration behind the last line of that Northern Circuit rhyme one should watch him as he drinks a stiff whisky-and-soda when he comes home after a late sitting in the House. It is a chastening experience to the sluggard, who could never experience such a consummation of mighty labours rewarded. The firm, broad hand on the tumbler, fizzing obsequiously exactly opposite his third waistcoat button as his feet absorb the deep comfort of carpet and fire, challenge the world to deny his right to it as St. Teresa challenged it to deny her right to eternal life. Out goes the jaw, up goes the glass and down goes the distillation of sixteen-hours slogging work—a meeting of the Shadow Cabinet, his fiftieth speech on some arid, technical bill, two hours on his latest Privy Council brief, and a draft address for the European Assembly.

Sir David, however, is by no means one of those lavish, cigar-and-buttonhole hosts with an all-the-year-round option on the best table in half-a-dozen expensive restaurants. Indeed he has no time to be. But hospitality is, to him, a creed, and when he does let go he will not tolerate half-measures. At a dinner he gave during the War Crimes trial, the skirling pipes of the Scots Guards pipers, the tossing of tartans in the candle-light, and the Highland toasts, drunk foot-on-table, so dissolved Andrei Vishinsky's private iron curtain that, before the evening was out, he had made no fewer than sixteen speeches, each one more thunderously pro-British than the last. At another dinner which Sir David gave on Burns' Night, the poet's lines about man's inhumanity to man and what should be done about it were recited in English, American, French, Russian, Czech, Yugoslavian, Dutch and Norwegian.

It seems likely that the powers who control our foreign affairs have realised the value of this off-parade bonhomie of his in warming-up the background for more serious discussions. At any rate, Sir David is the only British Chairman of any main committee of the European Assembly, and on the Joint Committee of the Assembly and the "Upper House" of Foreign Ministers. He himself has an almost fanatical belief in the power of individual friendships, on a high level, to pave the way for international ones. When warmed up to his subject he expounds his theory with a violence of feeling which would surprise those who know only his heavy shell. At the Nuremberg trials, by the simple formula of learning a few Russian colloquialisms and trotting them out as occasion offered, he became accepted by the Russians as a jovial fellow-man first and a British Tory second. Long after the trials were over, Rudenko, the chief Russian prosecutor, used to write to him just to exchange pleasantries and family news. His discovery surprised and jolted him. Of all the methods of establishing contact between East and West, this, he felt, had been given the least chance of proving itself.

He still feels so. And the time may come when he can extend beyond our island the old British principle that because you disagree with a man's politics you don't need to try and knock him down.

★

Who . . . Me?

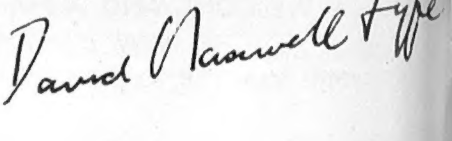
THE advantage of seeing ourselves as others see us is said by the poet to be:

"It wad frae mony a blunder free us
And foolish notion."

That may be, but when one is asked how far one agrees with the portrait, one is driven to the words of the late Mr. Dodgson:

"I can't explain myself, I'm afraid, Sir," said Alice, "because I'm not myself, you see."

"I don't see," said the Caterpillar.



Photographed by Harold White.

LEGAL FAÇADE: THE RT. HON. SIR DAVID MAXWELL FYFE, K.C., M.P.

MRS. SOMERSET de CHAIR

. . . formerly Miss June Carmen Appleton. Her marriage to Mr. Somerset de Chair, author and Conservative M.P. for South Paddington, took place at the States Court, Alderney, in August this year. Their home is Blickling Hall, Norfolk, which was bequeathed to the National Trust by the eleventh Marquess of Lothian.

Date-Book (Our Social Diary)

DEC. 14.

Cresta Ball at the Dorchester the usual gay affair. Party shown here (l. to r.) were Mrs. Mathieson, Sir Basil Tangye, Mrs. Alan Milne, Mr. George Groner, Miss Monica Michell, Mr. John Ewart, Mr. Alan Milne and Miss Violet Michell.

THE CRESTA BALL.

DEC. 15.

(Left.) At luncheon party after wedding of Mr. William L. Batt, head of Marshall Plan Mission here, and Mrs. Walther: Mr. J. S. Evans, Information Director, and Mrs. Evans, the bride and bridegroom, Mr. L. King, Administrative Officer, and Mrs. King.

DEC. 15.

(Right.) After wedding at St. Peter's, Eaton Square, between Mr. Robert Gay Dolbey, a lieutenant in the Life Guards, son of the late Mr. Robert Dolbey and of Mrs. Dolbey, of Grosvenor Square, and Miss Ann Wilson, daughter of Mr. Alexander Comber Wilson, of Dorney Windsor, and of Mrs. Esmee Wilson, of Park West, the bridegroom's regiment provided a Guard of Honour.

WEDDING LUNCHEON.

DOLBEY—WILSON WEDDING.

DEC. 15.

(Left.) With Kedleston Hall, lent by Viscount Scarsdale, as brilliant setting, Meynell Hunt Ball was rousing success. Sitting out (l. to r.) are Mr. Charles Pretzlik, Lord Scarsdale, Miss Anne Rose, the Hon. Mrs. John Coventry, Lady Scarsdale, and Mr. Stanley Derek-Smith.

DEC. 15.

(Right.) At London Rifle Brigade Rangers' annual film star ball at Sun Street, Finsbury Square, H.Q.: Mr. Jack Hawkins, Lt.-Col. Jock Nangle (the C.O.), Miss Jill Clifford, Brig. T. Fairfax-Ross (Hon. Colonel) and Miss Anthea Fairfax-Ross.

MEYNELL HUNT BALL.

RANGERS' FILM STAR BALL.

Date-
(Our Social

BEAMISH — STEVENSON WEDDING.

DEC. 15.

Unconventional wedding-view. The bridegroom, Major Tufton Beamish, Lewes' Tory M.P., mounted chair to deliver speech at reception after his marriage in House of Commons Crypt to Miss Janet Stevenson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Stevenson, of New York.

NALL-CAIN — STALLARD WEDDING.

HADOW — PHIPPS WEDDING.

DEC. 15.

(Left.) Snowy wedding at Eversley Church, Hants, for Lord and Lady Brocket's son, the Hon. Ronald C. M. Nall-Cain, and Miss Elizabeth M. Stallard, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Stallard, of Glaston Hill House, Eversley.

DEC. 16.

(Right.) The Duchess of Gloucester was present at the wedding of her niece, Miss Clare M. Phipps, daughter of Mr. Charles and Lady Sybil Phipps, of Chalcot, Westbury, to Capt. D. G. Hadow, M.C., R.A., son of the late Rev. F. B. and Mrs. Hadow, at St. Simon Zelotes, Cadogan Square.

HOME FOR BRITAIN'S FESTIVAL YEAR.

TO SEE A PANTOMIME ON ICE.

DEC. 18.

(Left.) Sir Laurence and Lady Olivier arrived back from Hollywood by cargo-boat to get a good rest—after making film of *Street Car Named Desire*—and before starting preparations for Festival of Britain productions.

DEC. 19.

(Right.) On arrival of the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress at Empire Pool, Wembley, to see *Dick Whittington on Ice*, principal boy Pat Gregory presented the Hon. Mrs. Denys Lowson with a bouquet.

Book
(Diary-Cont.)

DEC. 20.

(Left.) At the Savoy for Christmas Ball in aid of Margaret McMillan Memorial Fund—the Premier sang carols, Mrs. Attlee won prizes, and their son Martin won a Teddy-bear in the tombola. Admiring it: Miss Andrée Lonsdale-Hands.

DEC. 20.

(Right.) At the Dorchester some 400 guests dined, danced in aid of Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association. R.A.F. Band and Savoy Rumba band supplied the music. Guests of honour Lord and Lady Mountbatten.

AT THE SAVOY.

S.S. AND A.F.A. BALL.

DEC. 20.

Left.) Right-wing wedling in St. Mary Abbots, Kensington, when Miss Una Todd, leading Sussex Young Conservative, married Mr. Lawrence P. Wilson, on of the late Sir Roy Wilson and of Lady Wilson, f Pyrford Heath. Bride is aughter of the late Mr. V. H. Todd, and of Mrs. Todd, of Downsway, Woodingdean.

DEC. 20.

Right.) At the King's Chapel of the Savoy, the aby daughter of the Hon. Douglas and Mrs. Vivian vas christened Charlotte Claire.

WILSON—TODD WEDDING.

A VIVIAN CHRISTENING.

DEC. 22.

Left.) At Fairfield's Yard, Govan, Glasgow, Lady owitt performed the unching ceremony of .M.S. *Delight*—sixth of e Daring class of deroyers. Her husband, the ord Chancellor, is with her.

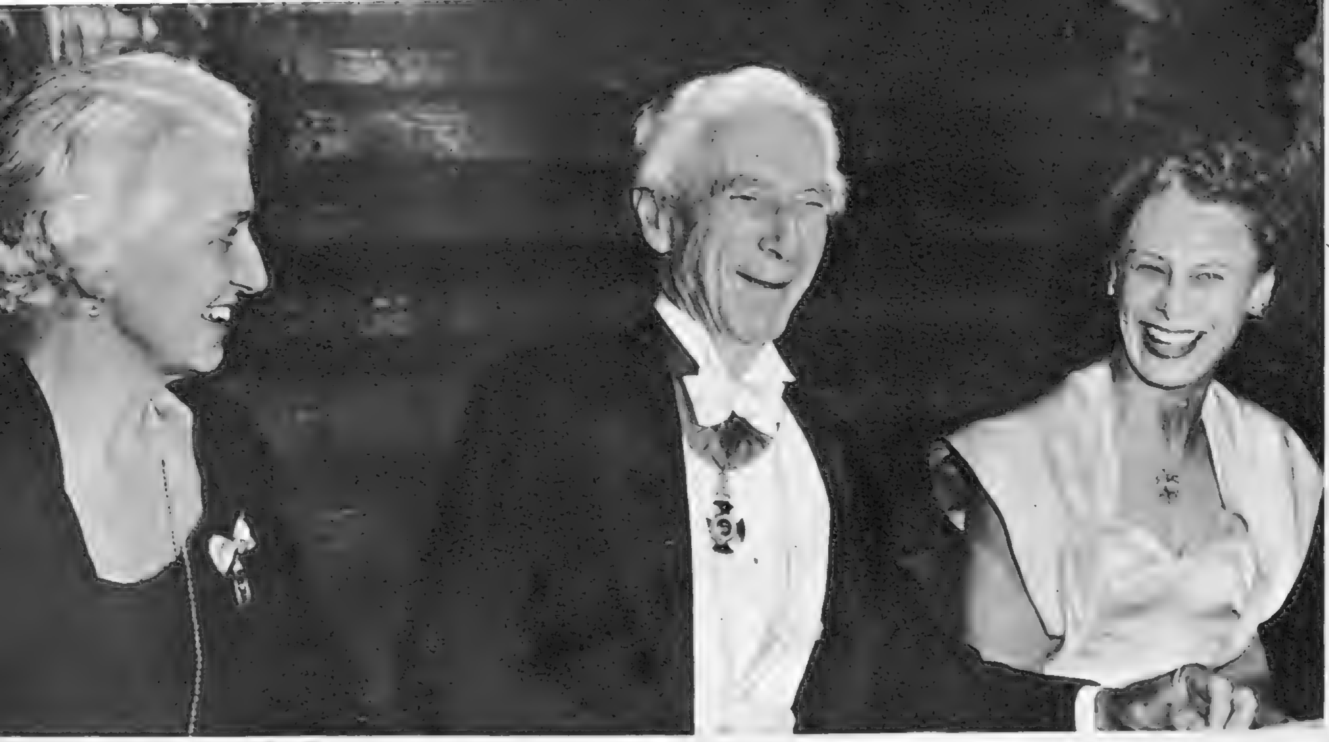
DEC. 26.

oxing Day meet of the st Sussex, held at Battle bbey. Roads crammed ith cars, buses, charancs, bringing people to e venue. In centre, Lord urghley, the Master, just before the move-off.

SHE LAUNCHED A DESTROYER.

MEET OF THE EAST SUSSEX.

Date-Book (Abroad)



FIFTIETH NOBEL PRIZE ANNIVERSARY BANQUET.

DEC. 12.

Sweden. A banquet was held in Stockholm's City Hall to commemorate the 50th Nobel Prize Anniversary. L. to r. are Mrs. Ereberg, wife of the Lord High Steward, Bertrand Russell, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, and Mrs. Mary Hench, wife of Dr. Philip Hench, joint winner of the Nobel Prize for Medicine.

STATE DINNER IN MALTA.

DEC. 14.

Malta. On Princess Elizabeth's return from her visit to Greece a State Dinner was held at the Palace, Valetta. On the left are Sir Gerald Creasy, Governor of Malta, and Lady Creasy awaiting the arrival of Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh. Right: Two of the guests, Vice-Admiral and Mrs. Guy Grantham.

THE PRINCESSES VISIT TRIPOLI.

DEC. 18.

Tripoli. Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret made a one-day visit by air to Tripoli. Here Princess Elizabeth is seen reviewing troops of the 1st Bn. Grenadier Guards, of which she is Colonel-in-Chief.

A ROYAL "DATE" WITH THE SUN

PRINCESS MARGARET'S trip to Malta last month fulfilled one of her greatest wishes—to stay with her sister and brother-in-law at the Villa Guardamangia. These pictures tell in sequence the story of her short, delightful visit. At top, inset, her Royal Highness met the bright sun of Nice, where the 'plane stopped down. . . . Shortly after her arrival the Princess attended a dance given by the 2nd and 5th Frigate Flotillas of the Mediterranean Fleet at the Sliema Club. . . . Together the Princesses met the Sea Ranger company of the Malta Girl Guides Association ; with them is the Island Commissioner, Mrs. F. Denaro. . . . In the barge of Rear-Admiral C. T. M. Pizey they arrived alongside H.M.S. *Liverpool* for the Sunday service. . . . And, as Princess Margaret's Viking aircraft left the ground for home, Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh waved good-bye. [J. A. Mizzi, "*Times of Malta.*"]

OUR BOOKSHELF

by RUPERT CROFT-COOKE

FORTUNE'S FINGER. By Phyllis Bottome. (*Faber ; 9s. 6d.*)
TEN DAYS OF CHRISTMAS. By G. B. Stern. (*Collins ; 10s. 6d.*)
A MAN'S LIFE. By J. H. B. Peel. (*Arthur Barker ; 12s. 6d.*)
THE ANATOMY OF VILLAINY. By Nigel Balchin. (*Collins ; 12s. 6d.*)
THE POACHER'S HANDBOOK. By Ian Niall. (*Heinemann ; 8s. 6d.*)

THE short stories which go to make up Miss Phyllis Bottome's new book are ultra-competent, polished and thoroughly mature. So are countless other stories by modern writers whose publishers have been threatened or cajoled into issuing them in a book-size collection which, they protest, must expect no considerable sales. So are the stories in lavishly illustrated magazines, English and American, which specialise in producing the work of the more highly-paid of living novelists. These stories differ from the others not so much in kind as in degree. They transcend their own *métier*. They show that what the Americans call, I believe, "slick paper fiction" can be Literature with quite a sizeable capital L. For while each is, as it were, a miniature novel, with plot and living characters, there is no suggestion of contrivance or condensing about them. They remind one that some of Mr. Somerset Maugham's best work has been done under the same limitations of space and scope.

It is hard to pick out one or another of these as better than the rest, but I particularly liked a re-telling of the parable of the Good Samaritan against a Jamaican background, called here "Among Thieves," and a brilliant little study, "The Shark's Fin," which describes the honeymoon of a pitifully spoilt and conceited young woman, and leaves her—quite literally—gasping on the shore. A more sophisticated and less human story is "Cover," but that may be the influence of Capri, on which its events take place. And "An Object Lesson" is beautifully observed—a "shop" piece, with novelists and literary agents as its characters. One other happy quality in all these stories is the reality of their most varied settings. While never holding up her incidents for passages of stagnant description, Miss Bottome can, in a few lines, whisk us to Bournemouth, the West Indies, Hull, a West of England vicarage, a Trans-atlantic liner, Cornwall, and pre-war Vienna.

IT is not easy for a novelist to be cosy and chatty without being stuffy and sentimental, but Miss G. B. Stern achieves this with casual brilliance, as though she had never realised the danger. Not that everything about this story is by any means cosy. The house and landscape, the Christmas atmosphere, the uncle-and-auntiness of most of the grown-ups, are all warm and comfy, but the passions of childhood, the distresses and triumphs, have nothing bland about them but are raw, real and sometimes very moving.

The story is simple enough. A number of children brought together for a Christmas holiday in the country decide to produce a Nativity play, and it goes into rehearsal. There is a neat reversal of rôles, for the audience—or all of it that matters—is to be a certain Uncle Ted, a popular actor even now starring in London in a play called *A Pearl of Great Price*. But the jealousies and clashing wills of childhood are too strong, it seems, for the weak spirit of co-operation, until Uncle Ted himself arrives and insists on the production. There is an unexpectedly pathetic little epilogue to the affair. This is not among Miss Stern's more important books, but it is likeable and absorbing, and should be immensely popular long after the ten days of Christmas are over.

HIS publishers tell us twice on the dust-jacket of his book, *A Man's Life*, that Mr. J. H. B. Peel is a young man, though this, I think, would have been evident to readers. He is going to feel rather hot and uncomfortable when he comes to re-read this novel in ten or twenty years' time, for mixed with some good descriptive writing is a sentimentality so mawkish, a snobbishness so trite, that I bit my lip in excruciating embarrassment. At first I thought it was to be a sort of parody of country novels, for I met an old nurse, called April Hedges, who curtsied when gentlemen entered and used phrases like "I mind it as well as yesterday," and characters called Trundle Sly and William Trot, and Billy Oates, who says, "them 's good victuals, Willum." When I realised that it was all to be taken in deadly seriousness, I found it less entertaining.

Adam Sibthorpe, the protagonist, whose life from cradle to grave is relentlessly followed, is a sententious bore. In common with his kind he grows more garrulous as he approaches seventy and reaches a peak of silliness in a long conversation with his daughter about her Commando fiancé and Life.

Later we see Adam, on his way to Buckingham Palace to be decorated, walking up the Mall. "Presently he encountered two private soldiers slouching in their unlovely battledress, caps skee-wiff over long hair, hands in the left pocket, sucking sweets, scanning the stop-press news. His own arm was already raised to acknowledge their salute before he realised that the martial punters had passed him without saluting, without troubling even to remove their hands from their pockets. Again, nearer the Palace, he actually had to jostle past three airmen, who paid respect neither to his rank nor to his age, nor to the long-service medal splendidly mute upon his chest. Adam was more saddened than angered by this flagrant abuse of manners and regulations." The annoying thing about all this is that Mr. Peel is talented. His writing is lucid and he knows his natural history, and in spite of all the nonsense in this book, he has a professional air. I am sure he will write good books.

MR. NIGEL BALCHIN has had what I can only describe as a bright idea. He has recalled the cases of thirteen—symbolically numbered ?—men who have at one time or another been almost universally held in horror by the world and, with a good deal of commentary and some rather tiresome generalisation, he asks what they had in common and whether they deserved their reputations. Towards some of them he is apologetic, almost respectful. He cannot accept Judas "as anything smaller or more personal than this—as the small Technicolor crook asking for our hisses by his childish cupidity and his exploitation of our emotional reactions to the idea of betrayal." Of Titus Oates he says that he was "not a subtle man—indeed, he appears hardly to have been an intelligent one. But he had an eye for the market. In another age he might have been a successful vendor of patent medicines, and ended in the House of Lords." Of the mutineer Richard Parker: "To class Parker as a major villain, or a villain at all, in the sense of a man of bad principle or deliberate ill-intention, would be absurd. He was, in fact, a very early and not untypical example of a trades union leader, without the strength of a trades union to back him." And of George Joseph (Brides-in-the-Bath) Smith: "He was not a great villain so much as a vicious little scoundrel." The final chapter, in which all the cases are reconsidered and annotated and in which some indisputable conclusions are drawn, is lively rather than profound. Mr. Balchin certainly makes his villains entertaining—but that is an easier task than to do the same for saints or heroes.

MY last book is sheer delight, not only on a shining night but at every season of the year. It gives all the ways known to the author—or to this reviewer—of getting a rabbit, a hare, a partridge, a pheasant, a trout or a salmon. The only lacuna, which fortunately I was able to supply from the instructions of an old gipsy, is of that most ancient and traditional form of poaching—the deer. It is in truth a handbook, practical and the fruit of rich experience, but it is also nostalgic and full of the scent and sounds of nature at night and wise advice from the dedicatees, Francie McGinn, Butcher Murphy, Snib, Black Bill, and Little Hugh. Mr. Niall's three novels have already shown that he has a talent for interpreting the more primitive of his acquaintance, and whatever damage this book may do to what he sadly calls his newly-found respectability, it will do none at all to his rising literary reputation. For countrymen, by residence or nature, the perfect exchange for a book token.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

MOUNTAIN RESCUE.
By Douglas Hewitt. (*Eyre and Spottiswoode ; 9s. 6d.*)

Curiously dated novel about the change in a man's life and views after an adventure with an escaped German prisoner in the Welsh mountains.

MIRANDA SPEAKS.
By Olivia Robertson. (*Peter Davies ; 9s. 6d.*)

Laboured Irish humour. Miranda of *The Tempest* appearing to a playwright in his dreams.

TO THE VICTORS THE SPOILS.
By Colin MacInnes. (*MacGibbon and Kee ; 12s. 6d.*)

A long-winded chronicle of a man's war-time experiences in Holland, Belgium and Germany. Conscientiously detailed and dull.

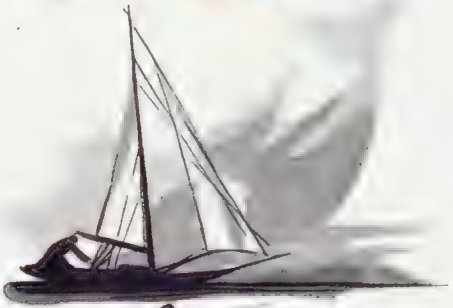
THE TAP ON THE LEFT SHOULDER.
By Ricardo Sicre. (*Cassells ; 10s. 6d.*)

Yet another novel about an idyllic French village, and how everyone in it behaved when the Germans came.

Photographed by Baron.

BALLERINA ON TOP Margot Fonteyn — whom one might well name *prima ballerina assoluta* of the Sadler's Wells Ballet Company — seen posed on the roof of the Hotel Scribe, Paris. At present she is with the Company on its triumphant Transatlantic tour. They return next month, to open at Covent Garden on February 21 with *The Sleeping Beauty*.

A SAILOR'S



JANUARY

Hark to the midnight bells ! A message clear
Rings o'er the starry night.—Oh, shed no tear
For what is past and gone, but brace thyself
To meet the challenge of the new-born year.

FEBRUARY

The harbour mouth is passed, the wind is free ;
The tavern lights, where in good company
Thou didst carouse, fade out of sight. What star
Shall be thy guide o'er the uncertain sea ?

MARCH

When blustering winds whip up the angry deep
And waves across thy storm-tossed vessel sweep,
Reef down thy sails, and trusting to thy star
Firmly thine hold upon the tiller keep.

APRIL

Fickle the April weather, sometimes fair
And sometimes sullen ; now must thou take care
Lest there should lurk behind some treach'rous cloud
A sudden squall to strike thee unaware.

MAY

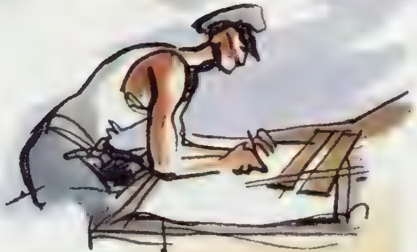
Thy sails are filled, the steady trade winds drive
Thee gaily on thy course. The dolphins dive
About thy bows which lift to crested waves.
Oh, shout aloud for joy to be alive.

JUNE

Through summer's halcyon days sail on thy way
And watch the flying fish with silver spray
Pencil the shimmering sea. The lingering sun
Seems loth to bid adieu to golden day.

CALENDAR

JULY

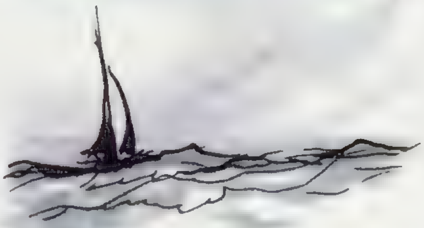


Now half the year is gone ; 'tis well for thee
To check thy reck'ning on the chart to see
That tide nor wind have set thee from thy course,
But that thou hast attained where thou wouldst be.

AUGUST

The breeze is dead, and from the sweltering sky
The sun beats down : the sails, now idle, lie
Against the mast : of no avail the helm,
For lo ! the doldrums of the year are nigh.

SEPTEMBER



Softly at first the autumn winds awake
The slumbering sails, then rising quickly shake
Them from their sloth, till once again thy craft
Through white-capped seas her wingéd way doth make.

OCTOBER

The autumn's golden days with their delight
Must yield to winter, and the encroaching night
Her lengthening watch doth take. Be wary now,
Oh, sailor ! Keep thy guiding star in sight !

NOVEMBER

The year is dying : winter holds her sway
With sullen skies above thee, and with grey
Enfolding fogs. The strident horn blares out
Its eerie cry of warning. Watch and pray !

DECEMBER

Look, sailor, look ! Canst see how yonder burn
The harbour lights, where eager watchers yearn
To welcome thee ? Thrice happy will they be
At Christmastide—or joy at thy return.

Verses by Commander N. A. Prichard ; drawings by H. R. Ellis.

Drawn by Michael ffolkes.

ROMEO AND JULIET

SCREEN.—Bette Davis : For her superb self-immolation in the part of the ageing actress in *All About Eve* : a mature and moving performance without sentimentality ; no false touches, no false tears.

C. A. Lejeune

LITERATURE.—Phyllis Bottome, whose short stories, in *Fortune's Finger*, are in the traditional pattern but alive and scintillating.

CHOICE OF THE MONTH

Selected by our Panel of Experts

STAGE.—Joy Parker : For being everything *Lady Precious Stream* should be in the revival of the charming piece of Chinese make-believe at the Arts.

J. C. Trewin

RADIO.—Professor John Z. Young, F.R.S., whose Reith Lectures on "Doubt and Certainty in Science" have attracted listeners who never thought they could be interested in the habits of the octopus and the convolutions of their own brains.

Frederick Laws

Old Stagers

TAKE IT FROM US (Adelphi).
That is to say, from the radio team, Jimmy Edwards, Joy Nichols and Dick Bentley.

ACCOLADE (Aldwych).
Emlyn Williams as a famous author who leads a double life in Regent's Park and Rotherhithe.

SEAGULLS OVER SORRENTO (Apollo).
A naval mixture: comedy and drama on an islet in the Orkneys, with Ronald Shiner as a very able seaman.

ACE OF CLUBS (Cambridge).
Minor Coward—but with the Juvenile Delinquents.

MISTER ROBERTS (Coliseum).
A Pacific voyage with the vast Coliseum stage as an American Navy cargo ship.

WHO IS SYLVIA ? (Criterion).
Terence Rattigan's light comedy flicks amiably across three periods.

CAROUSEL (Drury Lane).
Forget comparisons and see this as a good Rodgers-Hammerstein musical play in its own right.

THE HOLLY AND THE IVY (Duchess).
Wynyard Browne's Christmas gathering in a Norfolk vicarage is the best domestic play in London.

POINT OF DEPARTURE (Duke of York's).
Theatrical vigour in Anouilh's controversial play.

CAPTAIN CARVALLO (Garrick).
A witty neo-Ruritanian comedy: Diana Wynyard and James Donald.

RING ROUND THE MOON (Globe).
A charade taken from the French by Christopher Fry and produced expertly by Peter Brook.

THE SECOND MRS. TANQUERAY (Haymarket).
Eileen Herlie has a shot at Paula.

THE LITTLE HUT (Lyric).
Three castaways—one of them Robert Morley—frivol on a tropical island.

THE COCKTAIL PARTY (New).
T. S. Eliot's homily in verse.

BARTHOLOMEW FAIR (Old Vic, Waterloo Road).
O rare Ben Jonson !

KING'S RHAPSODY (Palace).
Barry Sinclair is the King, and Vanessa Lee his Queen, in Novello's Ruritanian "musical."

DEAR MISS PHŒBE (Phœnix).
Barrie set harmlessly to music.

HIS EXCELLENCY (Piccadilly).
Eric Portman shows how an ex-docker can govern a Mediterranean island.

TO DOROTHY, A SON (Savoy).
A bubble of comedy.

THE FOL-DE-ROLS (St. Martin's).
New Year song-and-dance.

WILL ANY GENTLEMAN ? (Strand).
The hunting of the Hare.

HOME AND BEAUTY (Wyndham's).
Maugham's chuckling farce.

AT THE THEATRE.

★ First Choice ★

"LACE ON HER PETTICOAT"

(Ambassadors)

IF you want to take to the theatre anyone who once enjoyed, say, *Bunty Pulls the Strings*, or the later *Marigold*, then your choice is plain. It is the comedy of 1885 in which Aimée Stuart has created a Lady of the Isles, a party-piece in future for young actresses. There is an almost equally good chance for another girl of the same age, though Lady Alexandra is more showy than wee Elspeth McNairn, and will be correspondingly more popular. I should say that, unless you are a confirmed cynic or find the theatre tolerable only when Mr. Eliot writes for it, you will probably enjoy *Lace on Her Petticoat* yourself: certainly the passages that cover the friendship between Elspeth and Alexandra (Alexis for short). The adult humours are less engaging. Yet, even when I write this, I feel a pang of disloyalty to Sophie Stewart: she is among the most genuinely charming actresses on our stage; I have been at her feet ever since, at the age of eighteen in a provincial repertory company, she managed to reconcile me to that unforgettable horror, the Glad Girl, Pollyanna.

At the Ambassadors she appears as a milliner, a little widow, another lady from Edinburgh, whose daughter is brought up by Grannie—serene but formidable—on an island off the south-west coast of Scotland. The period is 1885 when the classes were sharply distinguished. If you were born Upper Class you could not do more than nod condescendingly to the Middle Class; and in turn the Middle Class had views of its own about the Lower Orders. Mrs. Stuart shows the working of the system. The Marchioness may condescend to her milliner; but the milliner's daughter may not come to her little ladyship's birthday party. And the milliner from Edinburgh has her own feelings about the social position of a dockyard riveter from Glasgow. Lady Alexis and Elspeth McNairn, who have played together happily and formed one of those childhood friendships that seem so idyllic in the early 'teens, must be parted abruptly when Alexis dares to send a personal invitation to the cottage. The dramatist has written the children's scenes simply and gracefully: she is far less happy with the sweetness-and-light of Hamish's wooing. Still, I hazard that the comedy will run: it fills a vacancy in the current theatre-list.

Sophie Stewart, Muriel Aked (whose Grannie brings back a loved actress) and Ellis Irving deal rightly with the adults. But the play is carried by Perlita Neilson, very grave, very composed, as Alexis, and Eleanor Macready, similarly clear and unspoilt as Elspeth. It is, without doubt, a children's corner.

. with J. C. TREWIN

David Keir as Mc-Dougal

Muriel Aked as Mrs. Oliphant

Sophie Stewart as Faith McNairn

"LADY PRECIOUS STREAM"

(*Arts Theatre Club*)

"LET it be clearly understood that this unfurnished stage represents the scene of the picturesque garden of the Prime Minister, Wang Yun." By all means. Just as willingly we agree that the same stage represents "the magnificent court of His Majesty the King of the Western Regions." In fact, once S. I. Hsiung's Chinese jest is under way, we will agree to anything. As a holiday piece there is no more gay and elegant make-believe in London. The Arts Theatre cast spreads the willow-pattern service before us with great deftness and courtesy: we could not wish for better hosts. For my part, I am glad again to take wine in the snow and to gallop home with Hsieh-Ping-Kuei to China. After various open-air productions it is a change to find the make-believe indoors—and presented with so much style. Joy Parker's Precious Stream is indeed "one who could make you put the halter willingly round your neck if she chose to lead you along with her." Alan Macnaughtan, Lally Bowers, and David Bird, with his voice of honey-and-chopped-almonds, are others to whom honour is due. I prefer a statelier Prime Minister and a more naturally volatile Princess of the Western Regions; but the evening (as a poet said when he read the text years ago) is one of enchanted people who confer their enchantment upon us.

★

THE PANTOMIMES

(*Palladium, Princes, Casino*)

I MUST admit that none of the three major pantomimes is for me the true and perfect Christmas rally. When I saw them, the Palladium's *Babes in the Wood* was not yet very exciting; *Mother Goose*, at the Princes, was too rough-edged; and *Goody Two Shoes*, at the Casino, too indigestible. I have to say in fairness that by now the trio will probably be twice or three times as strong. Any pantomime takes a few performances to settle down. I can report already that strangers to the British theatre's own Christmas pudding will find most of the honoured traditions. Certain things are worth recording: the roar of the Highland cascade at the Casino, and Arthur Askey flipping about in skirts; Adele Dixon swashing it finely as Robin Hood at the Palladium; Jewel and Warriss amiably knotted at the same theatre; and Hy Hazell managing at the Princes to be at once boyish and principal. Toy-land, at the Palladium, has the holiday flash. Ethel Revnell (Princes) is that rarity, a female Dame. What else? There are no especially good chorus songs . . . but why start to complain? The theatres will be packed; any grouchy dotard should be thrown to the Yellow Dwarf.

Next Stage

SO there is more news of the National Theatre at last. On July 13, in the middle of the Festival of Britain, the King will lay the foundation-stone on the South Bank of the Thames, next to the L.C.C. Concert Hall. The National Theatre Act allows the Government to contribute £1,000,000 to the cost of the building. Ultimately there will be three companies: one of them in London, one in the provinces, and one for abroad.

IVOR NOVELLO

Barry Sinclair is playing Ivor Novello's part in *King's Rhapsody* while Mr. Novello has a needed holiday in Jamaica. At the same time Olive Gilbert is taking a rest and Lea Seidl is appearing in her part. I understand that Ivor Novello returned to the cast, after his operation in the summer, without the length of rest that the doctors ordered: hence his journey to Jamaica to get the benefit of the sun. When he re-appears in February the piece will be entirely re-dressed.

FRY AND DUKES

Christopher Fry is one of the front-rank dramatists from whom a new play is definitely announced this year. He is writing it for performance in a church during the Festival of Britain. It is called *A Sleep of Prisoners*, and next June the Pilgrim Players will present it at St. Peter Mancroft, Norwich.

Another distinguished dramatist, Ashley Dukes (who has just seen *A Glass of Water*, his adaptation of a Scribe play, done at the Mercury), has written *Celestina*, for presentation at the Embassy, Swiss Cottage, during January.

IBSEN AGAIN

Sonia Dresdel was the last actress to appear in London as Ibsen's Hedda Gabler (Westminster, March 1943), though the play has been broadcast on two or three occasions since. Now Jean Forbes-Robertson, who has not acted in London for some years, is to return to Hedda in Roy Rich's production at the Arts, opening on January 17 for four weeks. She appeared in the part at the Arts in 1931 and at the Criterion in 1936, and not so long ago she led the company in a Nottingham Playhouse production under her husband, Andre van Gyseghem.

GETTING AROUND

Donald Wolfit, on February 2 and 3, will appear as Malvolio in two performances of *Twelfth Night* in Middle Temple Hall, where the comedy was first staged on February 2, 1602. ("At our feast," wrote John Manningham in his diary, "wee had a play called 'Twelue Night, or What You Will' . . .") . . . Dulcie Gray and Michael Denison are to take *The Fourposter* to New York. . . . The Lord Chamberlain has refused a licence for the public performance of *The Children's Hour*. What will be the next stage here?

WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO . . .

LISA LENGYEL, for choosing England as the best bet in a search for men of magnetism.

BECAUSE she was "sorry for men," Miss Lengyel founded an institute in America for the study and development of magnetism. She is a director of this organisation, and last month she landed in Southampton from New York, to begin an intensive search for "the ten most magnetic Englishmen."

NURSE MARY CRACKNELL, for making "a piece of cake" of the Festival of Britain.

TO give a topical touch to the Christmas fare at St. Thomas's Hospital, Miss Cracknell designed and baked a scale model of the Festival site in cake for her patients. The base of the model measured 6 ft. by 4 ft. 6 ins., and she was helped in the making and baking of this giant miniature by her parents at their Alford, Sussex, home.

MRS. HILL, of Luton, for spending half a century keeping the hats on Harrovian heads.

THOUGH she's over seventy, Mrs. Hill still enjoys her work at the only straw-hat factory in Britain that makes hats for Harrow School. She has been employed in this way for over fifty years, and some of her best hats have been worn by Harrow's most illustrious sons. Here you see her sewing the rounds on the brim of a new yet legendary model.

ALBERT FISHER, for repeatedly falling off a bus in order to prevent accidents.

ALBERT FISHER, of Chiswick, spends a lot of his time falling off a bus with the greatest of ease. He is a driving instructor, and star of an accident demonstration show which is touring London Transport's garages and depots to show how accidents can be avoided. His act is staged before drivers and conductors, with dummy traffic lights.

. . AND WE APPLAUD

ERICH KLEIBER,

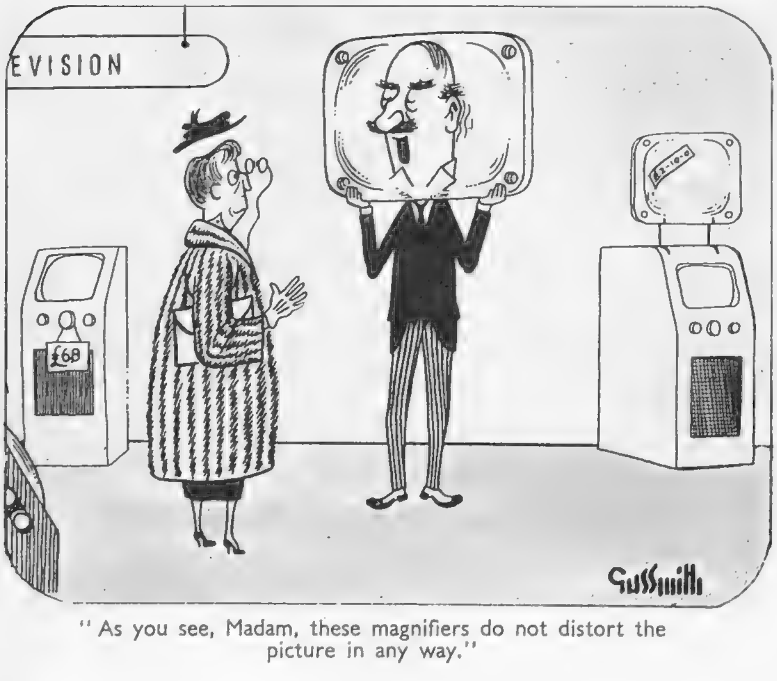
for a brilliant début as guest conductor at Covent Garden.

Kleiber's first appearance at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, conducting *Rosenkavalier*, was a great occasion. He electrified the audience and revitalised the opera by his fresh and individual interpretation of the music. This triumph was followed by an equally great performance of Tchaikovsky's *Queen of Spades*. The Viennese conductor will remain at Covent Garden during January and February.

A scene from a recent production of James Bridie's play, *Jonah*, with (l. to r.) Harry Shacklock, Robin Bailey, and Ernest Jay as Jonah. Well done, but a rather boring play.

Sally Ann Howes as Cinderella in the TV pantomime prepares for a "take" in one of the filmed sequences. Note the badly fitting wigs, which marred the effect.

To mark the opening of a new studio at Lime Grove, the B.B.C. dug deep into its pocket and presented a slap-up variety show: "Gala Variety." Here is one of the dance ensembles in the inevitable tropical number.



"As you see, Madam, these magnifiers do not distort the picture in any way."

TELEVISION

by CYRIL BUTCHER

BEFORE going any further, we would like to wish you a Happy New Year. This is a season when the conscientious ponder over the past twelve months, give a satisfied nod at the memory of things done well, frown at the thought of mistakes, and make optimistic resolutions. Why should a critic not do the same?

Well, to begin with, we can claim that every opinion expressed has been 100 per cent. sincere. It has not always been easy or even pleasant. Before taking on the responsibility of these pages we had already a considerable knowledge of television and its people. We had written for it, we had helped in its production, seen it from all angles: the rehearsal room, the studio floor, and the control gallery. In the course of all this we had come to have a warm regard for some of the folk up at Ally Pally and cordially to dislike others. The same applies to those we have met in the process of gathering material of the more general side of television for our articles, as opposed to their purely critical moments. Personal contacts with those whose work he has to assess make things difficult for a critic, but in our case these are unavoidable. So, right at the beginning we steeled our heart and resolved to treat friend or foe alike, nothing extenuating nor setting down aught in malice. To this resolve we have kept: appreciative bouquets and hearty kicks have been donated without fear or favour. In most cases the former have been accepted with modest grace and the latter without rancour.

Mistakes? Maybe, but we hope not. Anyway, it is difficult to say, because a critic has only his own personal standards by which to judge. He must be the sole arbiter of his opinions and never let himself be swayed by what other people say. Too often he is the butt of misguided friends who advance their own opinions claiming that they are those of "the man in the street" and should be considered by him. That is all wrong. The critic is not the man in the street. He is—or should be—an expert in his subject which is the only reason he is paid for his pains.

All the same, it struck us that it might afford some innocent amusement to compare our verdicts on one or two of last year's offerings with those of the man in the street—or rather, the viewer in the home. We picked them at random from memory, then had a snoop at the official viewer-reactions, culled in terms of letters of praise or abuse to Alexandra Palace. *Othello*, which we seem to remember smacking down pretty hard, was an enormous success with the public. However, we were in perfect agreement over another pet hate of ours—*Hail Nero*. As for our "raves," we both liked *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, but we diverged on the subject

Mrs. March (Barbara Everest) gathers her daughters around her to read father's letter in a scene from Louisa M. Alcott's *Little Women*, which is being serialised for the children.

The sensational flying ballet from *Babes in the Wood on Ice* at the Empress Hall, part of which was televised by O.B.s just before Christmas.

of *L'Arlesienne, Frankie and Johnny* and *Thérèse Raquin*. The Outside Broadcasts provided practically perfect concord, especially the Cross-Channel effort, which provoked amazing appreciation. Whether this little experiment proved anything is doubtful, but t was not unilluminating.

We were glad to see that "Juvenile Court," which we reviewed n the last issue, earned the highest-ever praise from the public for a studio production. An amusing story is circulating, which pays tribute to the realism, to which we referred, of the court scenes. It appears that a relative of Ian Atkins, who produced, overheard a group of men discussing the broadcast in a station café. The consensus of opinion was that, in spite of everything said to the contrary, the characters had not been played by actors and actresses, but all by real people. "You remember that old bag they brought on in the end, the one who wouldn't look after her kids?" the chief informant declared. "Well, they took her off the streets." The actress in question was Freda Bamford, and she happens to be Mrs. Ian Atkins!

HOWEVER, it's time we did a little reviewing. Taking the Christmas season as a whole, it was a period when television owners could feel that their money had been well invested. It began well with *Miss Hargreaves*, by Frank Baker, who adapted it from his own novel. The idea of a young man inventing a fictitious old lady, only to find that she materialises exactly as he has jokingly pictured her, is a delightful one, and it nearly made a great comedy. Unfortunately, the author did not take the theme quite lightly enough, intruding some quite unwanted philosophical parentheses into the action. But the production was in the best Michael Barry manner and Andrew Osborn made the young man in question a likeable enough fellow. To Margaret Rutherford, as the fantastic Miss H., goes this issue's Oscar.

Then Christian Simpson came along with a most interesting version of the ballet *Giselle*. He wisely left it more or less in its traditional form, though for the second act he used some most effective camera trickery. Dancing honours did not go to the leads, Tatiana Riabouchinska and Tutti Lemkow, who were both rather disappointing, but to Celia Franca for a beautiful performance in the difficult rôle of the Queen of the Willis.

Meanwhile, the children have been getting a feast of good things. We honestly recommend any adult viewer who is free between five and six in the evening to watch some of these programmes. The time will not be wasted. We are particularly enjoying the serialisation of Louisa M. Alcott's *Little Women*, while nothing can keep us from the television screen when another serial—an old but exciting film—*The Mystery Squadron*—is being shown.

Getting nearer to Christmas, O.B.s took us to the Empress Hall for a goodish slice of *Babes in the Wood on Ice*, with that lovely skating star, Belita, in the lead. It is a grand show and in spite of the fact that it was produced for a vast arena, it televised very well—well enough to determine us to go along and see it in the flesh, so to speak.

Over Yuletide itself, our set seemed permanently switched on and we developed television indigestion, in addition to the other varieties. But as the fare was universally good, we didn't mind a bit. For the youngsters there was *The Reluctant Dragon*, by Kenneth Grahame—production by Joy Harington—in which Master Jeremy Spenser smartly out-acted the adult players; also *The Cruise of the Toytown Belle*, by S. G. Hulme Beaman—produced by Rex Tucker—in which we followed the adventures of Larry the Lamb and companions in search of hidden treasure with breathless interest.

We elder ones were treated to a more mixed bag. First we had *A Soldier for Christmas*, by Reginald Beckwith, which Douglas Allen handled adroitly, even though it was not the type of play we would have chosen for him. The title pretty well explains the plot: of an English family in the upper bracket of the middle class, who invite a Canadian soldier to spend the holiday with them during the war years. The rest is a mixture of Coward, Chekhov and Karl Marx, and quite good fun. Though Robert Beatty was starring, as the soldier, he suffered from the devastating competition of Heather Thatcher, as his hostess (one of those dithering rôles in which she is quite matchless). Rachel Gurney, who gave a beautifully-controlled performance as the daughter, also suffered from competition, for while it is no secret that Miss Thatcher is no longer in her teens, on television she is a raving beauty.

Rightly enough, Christmas Day produced a really memorable broadcast: Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*, with Bransby Williams as Scrooge. Eric Fawcett, who adapted Dominic Roche's play version and produced, turned in one of the best jobs of work in his career. The story, with its ghosts and spirits, obviously lends itself to a full use of camera superimposition—a dangerous trick used by inexpert hands. But Mr. Fawcett's are just about as experienced as one will find. Nor did he, in this welter of technicalities, forget that he was dealing with a lovely and moving tale which needs most delicate handling. Thank you, Mr. Fawcett.

Ally Pally's panto, *Cinderella*, was just a shade disappointing. No fault of the artists—especially Sally Ann Howes and Jack Hulbert. But, oh my! The settings and the costumes! "Tatty" was the word.

OUR CRITIC'S CHOICE

MARGARET RUTHERFORD, for her hilarious, yet delicate, performance as Constance Hargreaves in Frank Baker's play, *Miss Hargreaves*. In this rôle Miss Rutherford proved that she is not only a brilliant clown, but a superb actress with apparently limitless range.

★ ★ ★ AT THE

REVIEWS by C. A. LEJEUNE

" ALL ABOUT EVE."—Bette Davis has never done anything better than in this back-stage story of American theatre life. L. to r. above are the four leading players : Hugh Marlowe, Anne Baxter, Gary Merrill and Bette Davis.

"ALL ABOUT EVE"

THAT brilliant film, *All About Eve*, will make its most direct appeal, I suppose, to the people who know and love everything about the back-stage of a theatre. Its characters, atmosphere, behaviour, preoccupations and allusions all belong to the theatre world, which is much the same in every country.

The story is a flashback affair—or rather, to be precise, a flash-bulb affair. It begins at the banquet at which young Eve Harrington, smiling, radiant, but prettily modest, as becomes a débutante actress who has just been nominated for the Sarah Siddons Award for distinguished achievement in the theatre, steps up to receive her trophy. As she reaches out her hand for it, the news-boys get to work. Lights flash ; Press cameras click ; the picture on the screen freezes to a " still." Here, on the front page of the morning papers, is Eve Harrington, the woman of the theatre year, as she appears to millions of people reading her story at breakfast over their coffee and toast. Then the picture goes back to show us All about Eve, and her spectacular rise to fame, through the eyes of the people who have best cause to know her.

These are the ageing Broadway actress, whose parts she has taken over ; her best friend, a kind non-professional woman who first introduced the stage-struck girl to the great star ; a producer, a playwright, and a cynical but experienced critic. All these people have played their parts in Eve's success, and to all of them she pays glowing tribute, in her shy speech of thanks. What they did, and how they did them, I don't propose to reveal. The fascination of *All About Eve* is its quality of continuous surprise. You sit on and on, without noticing the passage of time, because you are genuinely curious to learn what is going to happen.

The acting is just right all through ; with Anne Baxter a demurely misleading Eve, Celeste Holm exact to the type of the woman friend, Gary Merrill and Hugh Marlowe convincing as producer and playwright, and George Sanders the prince of critics-about-town. When all is said and done, however, *All About Eve* remains Bette Davis's film. 'Miss Davis has never done anything better than this portrait of a talented temperamental actress of forty-odd, who looks every year of her age and knows it ; who loses her heart and her temper with equal thoroughness ; who acts in her own home as consistently as she acts behind the footlights. Her final triumph is to make this tiresome fading woman lovable, and encourage a bright young audience to go away thinking of her as a nice, poor OLD thing.

★

"HARVEY"

I HAPPEN to be one of the very few people in London who never saw the play of *Harvey*. This, I argue, gives me quite a pull over most of my critical colleagues. While they were performing mental somersaults trying to discover wherein the film differs from the theatre piece, and arguing as to whether James Stewart is better than Sid Field and worse than Joe E. Brown, or better than Joe E. Brown and worse than Sid Field, or better or worse than both, I was free to concentrate on the picture.

What I saw gave me quite a surprise. I knew, of course, that *Harvey* was concerned with a happy alcoholic who fancied himself constantly companioned by a white rabbit 6 ft. high. But somehow I had imagined the piece to be a candid farce, something like *Will Any Gentleman?* or *One Wild Oat*. Since I am no great lover of farce, even at its best, it was a relief to me to find that *Harvey* is, on the whole, a very gentle work. Whimsy it should be called really, I suppose ; even a modern morality play. Its design is not primarily to raise laughter, although it is not averse from raising laughter by the way. Its true purpose is to preach a sermon about kindness.

Many people will thoroughly disapprove of this film. They will dislike the suggestion that drink brings out the best in a man. (That's a pertinent line, though, about Harvey's size—" Nobody ever brings anything small into a bar.") Quite a number of people will resent the supposedly funny scenes in a mental home, to which Elwood's sister tries to consign Elwood, and in which she is herself trapped. I myself found them completely unfunny and rather cruel, just as I disliked the jokes about insanity in *Arsenic and Old Lace*.

Yet it is fair to Harvey to remember that some of the best authors have been concerned with the thin dividing-line between mental balance and unbalance, the question of who is really mad and who is sane. *Don Quixote* dealt with that problem, and so did *The Poet and the Lunatic*. It is greatly to James Stewart's credit that he plays the part almost as though it had been written by a Cervantes or a Chesterton. Apart from Mr. Stewart, I don't think the piece quite comes off, but its great merit is that it will set people arguing. To set them arguing is to set their minds working : by no means a normal sequel to a visit to the films.

FILMS IN BRIEF

"JOFROI."—One of Marcel Pagnol's studies of a close group of neighbours in a small French community, centring this time round an argument between two Provençal peasants as to whether the trees should be cut down in an orchard. Human, kindly, wise and funny : a small jewel of a picture.

"PAS DE VACANCES POUR LE BON DIEU."—A less distinguished but still charming French film about a gang of poor children, left behind when their friends go on summer holiday, who organise a racket of stealing pedigree dogs and collecting the rewards for their return. Clever children, delightful Paris street scenes.

"KING SOLOMON'S MINES."—Deborah Kerr and Stewart Granger demonstrate successfully that Darkest Africa can never really be the white star's grave, after braving all the dangers of a Whipsnade stampede, and the most savage folk-dancing ever seen outside the Home Counties.

"HIGHLY DANGEROUS."—An Eric Ambler thriller which relies upon your belief that Margaret Lockwood is the only entomologist in Britain capable of investigating the breeding of disease germs for warfare in the Middle East.

"MY SON, THE PROFESSOR."—The great Italian actor, Aldo Fabrizi, in a part that might have been tailor-made for Emil Jannings. Sentiment and local politics ; some nice shots of Rome ; a general air of forced economy.

"I'LL GET BY."—But only just.

" HARVEY."—American whimsy which doesn't quite come off, but will certainly set people arguing. Above : James Stewart as Elwood P. Dowd, with Josephine Hull as his sister, Veta.

CINEMA ★ ★ ★

PREVIEW

PANDORA AND THE FLYING DUTCHMAN is a drama of love and jealousy set in a Spanish fishing village. It concerns Pandora, a beautiful American girl who attracts all men but finds it impossible to love any of them. Eventually she consents to become engaged to Stephen Cameron, a racing motorist; but that same evening a strange Dutchman, Hendrich Van der Zee, comes into her life and, at last, she finds herself in love. The wild infatuation for Pandora of yet another man, Montalvo the matador, brings about the unforeseen dénouement of this dramatic story. James Mason and Ava Gardner have the leading rôles, with Nigel Patrick, Sheila Sim, Harold Warrender and Mario Cabre. We shall be seeing the film in London at the end of this month.

On the right: Montalvo, the hot-blooded matador (Mario Cabre), stabs the Dutchman, Hendrich Van der Zee (James Mason).

Below: At a party to celebrate Stephen Cameron's latest speed record, Janet (Sheila Sim) hurls abuse at Pandora (Ava Gardner). Restraining her is her uncle, Geoffrey Fielding (Harold Warrender), with Stephen (Nigel Patrick) looking on.

WHAT GOES ON

Our Puppets Select Their List of Coming Events

★ *This List went to Press last week, so please check with the Daily Papers.*

CUPID

The engagement is announced between:

Geoffrey Ralph, fourth son of Sir Thomas and Lady **Merton**, of Stubbings House, Maidenhead Thicket, and Bridget, daughter of Major and Mrs. H. G. **Aylmer**, of 44, Eaton Place, S.W.1.

Alan Edgar **Hood**, second son of the late Sir Joseph Hood, Bt., M.P., of Wimbledon, and of Marie Lady Hood, of 8, Thorney Court, Hyde Park Gate, London, W.8, and Magdalen, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George **Eyston**, of 791, Park Avenue, New York, and 30, Cottesmore Court, Kensington, W.8.

Charles, son of Mr. John **Weld-Blundell**, and the late Mrs. Weld-Blundell, of Ince-Blundell Hall, Lancashire, and Veronica, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred **Noyes**, of Lisle Combe, St. Lawrence, Isle of Wight.

Richard John Fisher **Turner**, Sub-Lieut., R.N., son of Group Captain and Mrs. E. F. Turner, of Limavady, Co. Londonderry, N. Ireland, and Julia Jane, daughter of the Hon. Godfrey and Mrs. **Money-Coutts**, of 50, Brunswick Gardens, W.8.

Viscount **Ikerrin**, only son of the Earl of Carrick, of Pinehurst, N. Carolina, and of Lady Chesham, and Belinda, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. David Constable **Maxwell**, of Bosworth Hall, near Rugby.

The Marquess of **Normanby**, of Mulgrave Castle, Whitby, and 49, Hamilton Terrace, N.W.8, and the Hon. Grania **Guinness**, of 55, Fountain House, Park Lane, W.1, daughter of the late Lord and Lady Moyne.

SPORT

RACING

Jan.	4.	Stratford-on-Avon.
,,	5-6.	Haydock and Windsor.
,,	8-9.	Leicester.
,,	10-11.	Cheltenham.
,,	12-13.	Lingfield.
,,	13.	Warwick.
,,	15-16.	Birmingham.
,,	17-18.	Hurst Park.
,,	19-20.	Sandown Park.
,,	20.	Wetherby.

HUNT BALLS

Jan. 5: The Surrey Union Hunt Ball at the Dorking Halls. The Bicester and Warden Hill Hunt Ball at Wotton House, Aylesbury. The Dartmoor Hunt Ball at Alston Hall. The Rufford Hunt Ball at Thoresby House. The Whaddon Chase Hunt Ball at Bletchley. The Old Berks Hunt Ball in the Officers' Mess, Brize Norton Aerodrome. The South and West Wilts Hunt Ball at Fonthill House, Tisbury.

Jan. 12: The Cheshire Hunt Ball at Tabley House, Knutsford. The Hursley Hunt Ball at Marsh Court, near Stockbridge. The Grafton Hunt Ball at Wakefield Lodge. The Quorn Hunt Ball at Whatton Hall. The Crawley and Horsham Hunt Ball at the West Sussex Country Club, Coolhurst.

Jan. 19: The Monmouthshire Hunt Club dance at Llansantffraed Court, near Abergavenny. The Garth Hunt Club Ball at the White Hart Hotel, Windsor. The Fitzwilliam Hunt Ball at Hinchingbrooke Castle, Huntingdon. The Old Berkeley (East) Hunt Ball at the Town Hall, Watford.

Jan. 26: The V.W.H. (Earl Bathurst's) Hunt Ball at the Bingham Hall, Cirencester. The South Oxfordshire Hunt Ball at Phyllis Court Club, Henley-on-Thames.

ENTERTAINMENT

Here we offer suggestions and information about Christmas holiday entertainments for different age-groups.

PANTOMIMES AND CIRCUSES

Bertram Mills's Circus at Olympia.

Tom Arnold's 4th annual Mammoth Circus show at Harringay.

"Dick Whittington on Ice" (Empire Pool, Wembley)—with a cast of international skating and pantomime stars.

"Goody Two Shoes" (London Casino)—with Arthur Askey.

"Beauty and the Beast" (Westminster)—a Christmas fairy story.

"Charley's Aunt" (Saville)—34th London season.

"Babes in the Wood on Ice" (Empress Hall, Earl's Court).

"Peter Pan" (Scala)—Margaret Lockwood again as Peter.

"The Silver Curlew" (Fortune)—Eleanor Farjeon's fairy-story.

"Babes in the Wood" (Palladium)—with Adele Dixon, Jewel and Warriss, and Sonnie Hale.

"Mother Goose" (Princes)—with Ethel Revnell, Hy Hazell and Billy Russell.

"Aladdin" (King's, Hammersmith)—with Clarkson Rose.

"Where the Rainbow Ends" (Stoll)—matinées only.

"The Black Arrow" (Old Vic)—by Robert Louis Stevenson. Until Jan. 13.

"Maskelyne's Mysteries" (Comedy).

"The Christmas Tree" (New Boltons)—3 weeks from Jan. 2.

TEEN-AGE SHOWS

"Take It From Us" (Adelphi)—Joy Nichols, Jimmy Edwards and Dick Bentley, in revue.

"Ace of Clubs" (Cambridge)—Noël Coward's musical thriller, with Pat Kirkwood and Graham Payn.

"Worm's Eye View" (Comedy)—comedy about R.A.F. types; London's longest run.

"Carousel" (Drury Lane)—the famous Rodgers and Hammerstein musical from Broadway.

"Seagulls Over Sorrento" (Apollo)—comedy about sailors; with Ronald Shiner and William Hartnell.

"The Holly and the Ivy" (Duchess) — interesting Christmas family play, with Jane Baxter, Daphne Arthur and Herbert Lomas.

"Ring Round the Moon" (Globe)—a sophisticated fairy story, with Margaret Rutherford, Claire Bloom and Paul Scofield.

"King's Rhapsody" (Palace)—Ivor Novello's musical romance.

"Dear Miss Phœbe" (Phœnix)—period musical adapted from J. M. Barrie's "Quality Street."

"His Excellency" (Piccadilly)—Eric Portman as an ex-docker who becomes Governor of an island.

"Will Any Gentleman?" (Strand)—Robertson Hare and Brian Reece.

"Reluctant Heroes" (Whitehall)—farce about National Service in the Army.

"Blue for a Boy" (His Majesty's)—a musical romp with Fred Emney, Richard Hearne and Austin Melford.

MUSIC

At Royal Albert Hall:

The Royal Choral Society presents Handel's "Messiah" with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent on Jan. 6; and again on Jan. 13.

The London Symphony Orchestra conducted by George Weldon on Jan. 7. Solo pianoforte: Pouishnoff.

A Winter Series of the Henry Wood Promenade Concerts from Jan. 8 to 13 and Jan. 15 to 20, at 7.30. The B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra. Conductors: Sir Malcolm Sargent and Basil Cameron.

The London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips on Jan. 14 at 3 p.m. Solo pianoforte: Lyvia Rev.

Verdi's "Requiem" by the B.B.C. Choral Society conducted by Leslie Woodgate on Jan. 14 at 7 p.m.

OPERA

At Royal Opera House, Covent Garden: the opera season continues with "The Queen of Spades" now added to the repertory.

At Sadler's Wells: on Jan. 16 there will be a first performance of a new production of "Don Carlos."

At the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith: "Let 's Make an Opera," by Benjamin Britten: until Jan. 27.

BALLET

At Sadler's Wells: the ballet season continues with performances on Tuesday evenings and Saturday matinées.

At the Stoll Theatre, Kingsway: Festival Ballet with Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin. Guest artist is now Tatiana Riabouchinska.

ART

At the Royal Academy, Burlington House: Holbein and other Masters of the 16th and 17th centuries.

At Victoria and Albert Museum: Parlour Games and Cards.

At Arts Council, 4, St. James's Square: Memorial Exhibition of drawings by Randolph Schwabe. Jan. 3-27.

At the Institute of Contemporary Arts: 1950 Aspects of British Art. Until Jan. 11.

Nineteenth-century French Paintings from the Burrell Collection, at New Burlington Galleries, Old Burlington Street. Jan. 2-30.

New Year Exhibition at Leicester Galleries, Leicester Square. Jan. 5-25.

Mobiles by Alexander Calder, at Lefevre Gallery, 30 Bruton Street. From Jan. 10.

Young Contemporaries, at R.B.A. Galleries, Suffolk Street, Pall Mall. From Jan. 16.

45th Annual Exhibition of the Pastel Society, at R.I. Galleries, 195, Piccadilly. Jan. 12-30.

SOCIAL EVENTS

A Ball in aid of the Hampshire Red Cross will be held at Dogmersfield House, Hampshire, on Jan. 5

The Pineapple Ball will be held at Grosvenor House, in aid of the Stowe Club for Boys, on Jan. 10.

The "Blue Bird" children's fancy-dress party will be held at the Hyde Park Hotel on Jan. 11, in aid of the Kensington branch of the N.S.P.C.C. Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone, will attend.

The N.S.P.C.C. Annual Ball (Manchester branch) will be held at the Royal George Hotel, Knutsford, on Jan. 19.

The Winter Ball at the Dorchester on Jan. 24. Mrs. Winston Churchill is president and Lady Bennett is chairman. Proceeds go to Conservative funds.

THEATRE : Elisabeth Bergner, who last appeared here as Saint Joan at the 1938 Malvern Festival, will be seen in the West End soon in *The Gay Invalid*, an adaptation of Molière's *Le Malade Imaginaire*. A. E. Matthews plays the title-rôle.

CABARET : Twenty-two-year-old Line Renaud, who opens at the Society Restaurant, Jermyn Street, to-morrow (January 4), has recently broken all box-office records at the Paris A.B.C., and is described as France's No. 1 popular singer.

ENGAGED (see opposite page) : Miss Veronica Noyes, eldest daughter of Mr. Alfred Noyes, the poet, to Mr. Charles Weld-Blundell.

CABARET : Miss Frances Day, who opened at the Café de Paris on New Year's Eve. An established musical comedy star, she scored a great personal success on the legitimate stage as Babzy Buoyant in Shaw's *Buoyant Billions* at the 1949 Malvern Festival.

ENGAGED (see opposite page) : Miss Belinda Constable Maxwell and Viscount Ikerrin, nineteen-year-old only son of the Earl of Carrick, dining in the West End.

VARIETY : The Fol-de-Rols, a name synonymous with streamlined seaside concert parties—ex-members include Arthur Askey, Richard Murdoch, Jack Warner, Eric Barker, and Pearl Hackney—came to London on New Year's Day, where they opened at the St. Martin's Theatre. In the above scene from "The Queen of Hearts" are June Powell, the maid; Anthony Hayes, the knave; Robin Ford, the King; and Thurza Rogers, the Queen.

EVENING ELEGANCE

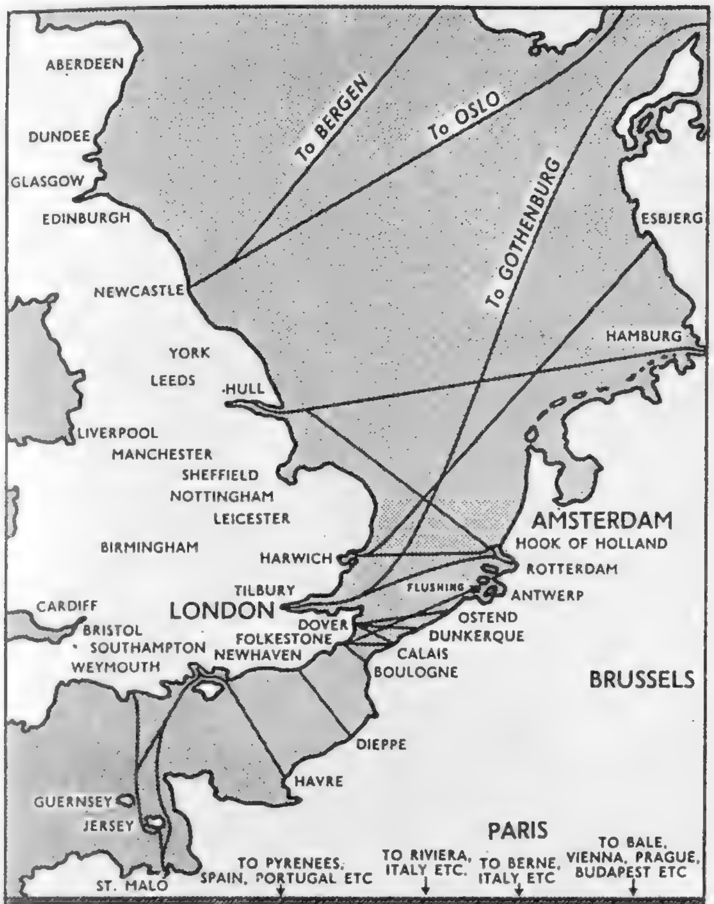
by
Elizabeth Penrose

NOW is the season when the possession of one really beautiful evening frock is a "must"—for that hunt ball, for a special night out in town or, now that travel allowances have increased, to take on a winter holiday abroad.

Above: A floral patterned gown with panniered hip-line and a very full skirt; the draped neck-line carries on to fall loosely across the top of the shoulders. This particular fabric, rayon crêpe-de-Chine printed by a special process, is by the well-known French firm, Bourdelin. The gown was made by Roecliff and Chapman, and this style, in other fabrics, will be available at some of the leading stores at about twenty guineas.

Right: A "*grand robe de style*" by Frederick Starke in a subtle shade reminiscent of marron glacé. Note the graceful lines of the bodice which flow on down into the skirt. Galleries Lafayette of Regent Street and Givan of Bond Street will have it at approximately thirty-five guineas.

(Continued on page 34.)



DIRECT ROUTES TO THE CONTINENT

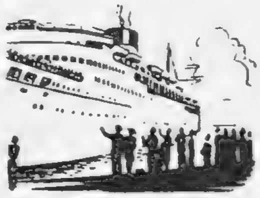
BRITISH RAILWAYS

HOLIDAYS 1951

The best idea for the Festival Year

A TRIP TO

SOUTH AFRICA



This is the year for a voyage to the "fairest cape in all the circumference of the Earth"—fourteen memorable days en route to Cape Town, the Gateway to South Africa. Enjoy travel at its best by the largest and fastest ships on the South African run.

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is a tonic in itself!

EVENING ELEGANCE

(Continued from page 32)

by

Elizabeth Penrose

Above: Sometimes called the trumpet line or the mermaid line, in this case it displays more of a Spanish influence with its alternately fitting and flaring cut. Susan Small makes it in black lace over organdie with a detachable cape covering the strapless bodice. Woollands of Knightsbridge will have it in their model gown department at the end of the month; priced about thirty-one guineas.

Left: Appropriately named Cotillon, this Lady in Black model in taffetas and ruched chiffon is ideal for dancing. Harvey Nichols of Knightsbridge and Dickins and Jones of Regent Street will be having it at around thirty pounds.

THE MOST TREASURED NAME IN PERFUME...

CHANEL

January

Good resolutions come with the New Year: why not resolve to open an account with the Midland Bank? You will receive a friendly welcome at your nearest branch and at once enjoy the advantages of a banking service second to none. A booklet entitled "Midland Bank services for you", which you can obtain at any one of the 2,100 branches of the Bank, tells you how simple it is to open an account and of the many advantages which will follow.

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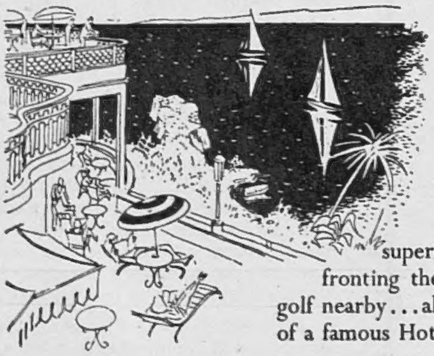

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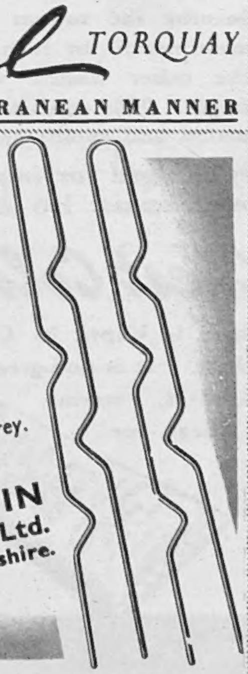

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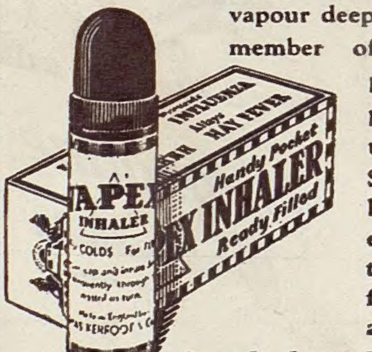

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Use Vapex-VOLATOL, which is Vapex in Ointment form, for rubbing on the chest. It is non-greasy and non-staining. VOLATOL warms, soothes and penetrates. Ideal for Children's colds.

VOLATOL—In handy tubes.

Of all Chemists.

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THOMAS KERFOOT & CO. LTD. LANCASHIRE

The Odd Half-Page

BERMUDIANS PAY NO INCOME TAX!

A close-up of Britain's oldest Colony, where you can still see the surrey-with-a-fringe-on-the-top.

By Sam Heppner.

THE other morning I called at the Government offices in Bermuda for my exit permit, and—unfortunately!—they gave it to me. Bermuda is an irregular tangle of glittering island gems, and only a dreary, soulless oaf, destitute of poetry and wonder, could ever wish to leave it.

It seems miraculous to me how the B.O.A.C. navigators find their way unerringly to these tiny coral islands, rising from an extinct volcano, a mere seventeen miles long and a mile or two in width. For the nearest land is North Carolina, nearly 600 miles away. How I envied the New Yorkers, only three-and-a-half hours by air from this veritable Eden. That is why so many of them are there—tourists, young and old, and starry-eyed honeymooners, sunning on the silver beaches, cycling along green lanes hedged with hibiscus, oleander and poinsettias, or strolling in the beautiful gardens of the Castle Harbour, Bermuda's smartest hotel, occupied during the war by American troops and now completely reconstructed and open once again after ten years. While they were there, the Americans built a million-dollar airstrip on which they now hold a ninety-nine-year lease.

A sterling area—Britain's oldest self-governing Colony, in fact—Bermuda presents an odd compromise between the British and American ways of life. The coloured taxi-driver who takes you from the airport to your hotel will drive on the left, but charge you in precious dollars and accept the equivalent in devalued £ s. d. after a swift calculation. Thirsty visitors will find that drinks are served American style—ice, cherries, Old-Fashioneds and swizzle-sticks—but so, alas, is the tea, and this condemns the unfortunate British tea-addict to a pale, watery beverage distilled from a miserable little tea-bag in the pot. Only butter and sugar are rationed. There is an abundance of everything else, though prices are high. The Bermudians pay no income tax. Their public services are efficient, and revenue is obtained from a small purchase tax and import duties, and since almost everything Bermuda consumes is imported, these are considerable.

Sixty-three per cent. of Bermuda's 40,000 inhabitants are coloured, but there is relatively little prejudice or discrimination and, although they are excluded from hotels and segregated in the schools, they seem happy and fairly prosperous and, in the main, get on exceedingly well with the whites. There is not much active trade unionism, presumably because, there being no mines, factories or workshops, there is no industrial exploitation, and the coloured people work reasonable hours for good wages as taxi-drivers, waiters, barmen, lift-girls, chambermaids and calypso singers. Tourism is the only industry; consequently, the visitor finds himself in a perpetual holiday atmosphere.

Although there is a housing shortage, most of the coloured Bermudians live in good, comfortable homes, and their interests are represented by seven of the thirty-six members in the House of Assembly, which is the oldest Parliament in the world after our own.

Bermuda has one factory only; in it they make perfume from the oleander and passion-flower. Hence the purity of the fresh sea air, which may perhaps best be sampled on the heights of the lovely Mid Ocean golf course. Laid out by Charles Blair Macdonald in 1921, the course is one of the world's finest, each hole being a reproduction of the best from eighteen other first-class courses. Until 1946 there were even no petrol fumes to contaminate the air. The only means of transport was the bicycle and horse-carriage, and in old St. George, the former capital, you can still see the coloured brothers Dai and Arthur Martin in their surrey-with-a-fringe-on-the-top, which they have been driving for the last fifty years.

The colours of Bermuda are quite breath-taking. The green of the fields and hedges is the greenest green. Great red and pink blooms spangle the hedges, and the light seems to possess some miraculous property that transfigures everything it touches—the incredibly blue sea, the pink coral beaches, the dazzling white sandstone houses—no matter what time of day it is. Yet there is a queer, overshadowing malevolence, obscurely frightening in the twilight, about the great palm leaves, the banana-trees and the leathery, spiky excrescences of the sub-tropical vegetation. And there is death amidst this luxuriant efflorescence of living things, for blight has attacked the Bermudian cedar-trees, and now great forests of grotesque, bleached sentinels tower majestically above the palms and cacti. In the light of the Bermuda moon which, indeed, is Joseph Conrad's "shaving off a bit of gold flung up," they have a silvery beauty, but closer examination reveals them as the stark, lifeless ghosts they are.

Recovering from a swift and fugitive enchantment, one has to beware of writing a travel brochure instead of an article. Adjectives may take hold of a writer and drag him to perdition. But Bermuda is, in a word, beautiful.

This England . . .

Wiltshire Downs near Broadchalke

THE story of Wiltshire is very English — in its busy-ness and love of peace. Domesday records 390 mills; later came wool, and blankets, and silk, and the first tobacco pipes. But to be thus busy the people needed peace . . . and were prepared to fight therefor. So in 1645, when roving bands from broken armies menaced all the land, arose the "Clubmen," or armed civilians, whose sole object was peace and the systematic punishment of King's man or Roundhead caught at plunder. This firm attitude to peace has given England much of her greatness and Englishmen their good living . . . whether it be carpets from Wilton, or engines from Swindon or those great beers of Burton — Bass and Worthington — themselves brewed by men of peace to give strength and courage to stand up for peace.

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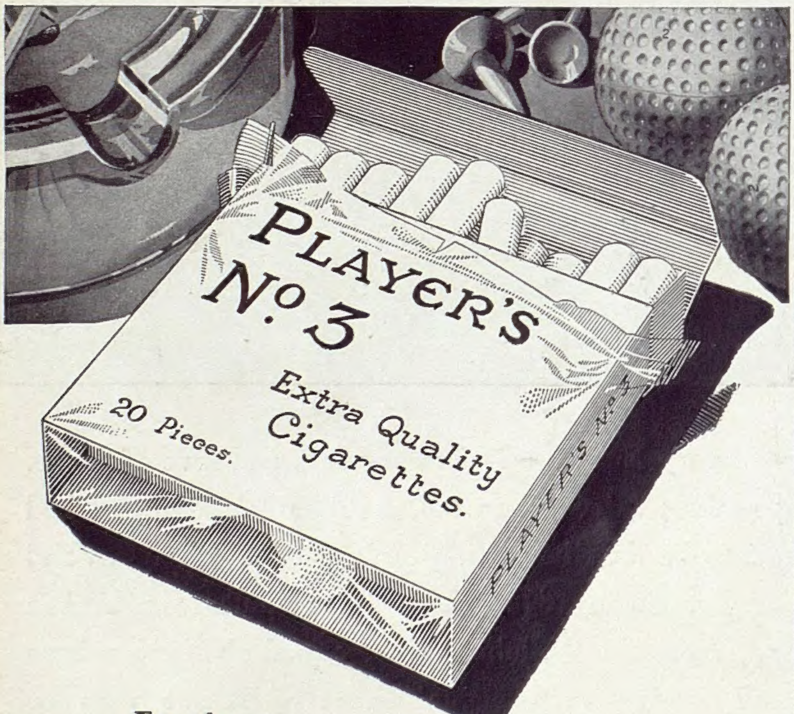

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PLAYER'S Nº3

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[3P102]

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